



ALTOONA • BLAIR COUNTY

A Private Non-Profit Development Corporation

229257

April 8, 2011

The Honorable Daniel R. Elliott, III
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Suite 1220
Washington, DC 20423-0001

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RE: Support for Efficient Uses of Transportation/Strong Freight Railroad Network

Dear Chairman Elliott:

I am writing on behalf of the Altoona-Blair County Development Corporation, the primary economic development agency serving the Altoona/Blair County Area of Pennsylvania, to express our support for a strong national railroad network that will assure the most productive and affordable freight railroads for our region, the state, and the entire country.

Successful modern economic development strategy encompasses all aspects of a community's asset base. That base includes traditional infrastructure such as land, buildings, housing options, utility infrastructure, and transportation modes and systems. As America finally begins to advance itself out of this severe recession, now is not the time to reverse progress by damaging the ability of the rail industry to reinvest and continue to provide strong service.

We at the Altoona-Blair County Development Corporation and our affiliate agencies enthusiastically support a healthy freight rail network that encourages investment and reinvestment by the industry along with supporting job growth and continued economic recovery. We are opposed to any policy or regulatory changes that would hinder the ability of the freight railroads in our country to continue investing billions of dollars in providing capital to grow and modernize the nation's rail structure.

We respectfully request that no regulatory or policy changes be pursued at this time by the Surface Transportation Board. It is absolutely essential that we maintain the strong and well-balanced regulatory policies that are in place today. These policies insure that freight rail is fair and competitive and that railroads are held accountable for their actions while providing our regional, state, and national shippers the world's most cost-effective rail freight service.

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Honorable Daniel R. Elliott, III

Chairman, Surface Transportation Board

April 11, 2011

On behalf of the Altoona-Blair County Development Corporation and its affiliated organizations, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your consideration of our position.

Sincerely,



Martin J. Marasco
President & CEO

MJM/ch

cc: Honorable Robert P. Casey, U.S. Senate
Honorable Patrick J. Toomey, U.S. Senate
Honorable Bill Shuster, U.S. House of Representatives
Jeremy Shoemaker
Roger Bennett
Darrell Wilson
ABCD Corp. Executive Committee
Pat Miller
Barry Surma